

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration of this application, as amended.

Applicants acknowledge with appreciation the indication of allowable subject matter in Claims 3, 5, 8, and 9.

Without acceding to the rejections, the claims have been amended to recite in independent form the allowable subject matter of Claims 3, 5, 8, and 9. In particular, Claim 1 has been amended to include the allowable subject matter of Claim 3 (now cancelled) and intervening Claim 2 (now cancelled). Claim 5 has been amended to include the subject matter of Claim 1 and intervening Claim 4 (now cancelled), Claim 8 has been amended to include the subject matter of Claim 1 and intervening Claim 6 (now cancelled), and Claim 9 has been amended to include the subject matter of Claim 1. Claim 7 has been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer.

Claims 15-17 have been added as analogs of dependent Claim 10, and Claims 11-14 were previously cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Thus, Claims 1, 5, 8-10, and 15-17 are pending, of which Claims 1, 5, 8, and 9 are independent.

In view of the amendments and remarks presented herein, Applicants respectfully request a prompt Notice of Allowance.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge to Deposit Account No. 50-1165 any fees under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 and 1.17 that may be required by this paper and to credit any overpayment to that Account. If any extension of time is required in connection with the filing of this paper and has not been requested separately, such extension is hereby requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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